

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWELFTH SESSION

Official Records


 Thursday, 17 October 1957,
at 3.15 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

Agenda item 12:

| | |
|--|----|
| Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters II, III, IV and V) (continued) | |
| Draft resolution on principles for international economic co-operation (continued) | 75 |

Chairman: Mr. Jiří NÓSEK (Czechoslovakia).

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council (chapters II, III, IV and V) (A/3613, A/3661, A/C.2/L.330) (continued)
DRAFT RESOLUTION ON PRINCIPLES FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (A/C.2/L.330) (continued)

1. Mr. O'BEIRNE (Ireland) said that he did not see what would be gained by the adoption of the draft resolution. The proposed declaration repeated principles that had been expressed more extensively in the United Nations Charter and in various resolutions of the Second Committee, and was in any case far from complete. The time that would be spent in drafting a more comprehensive declaration could more usefully be devoted to the many urgent practical problems before the Committee.

2. His delegation would vote against the draft resolution.

3. Mr. ULLRICH (Czechoslovakia) said that his Government was guided by the principles set out in the draft resolution and believed that the proposed declaration would be of great practical value. Such a declaration would provide a useful instrument for promoting world economic progress.

4. Mr. TREJOS (Costa Rica) observed that while his delegation agreed with the draft resolution in principle, it shared the view that the declaration was incomplete.

5. His delegation would vote against the draft resolution in its present form but would be prepared to support an amended version in the belief that international economic co-operation would be furthered by an appropriate declaration of principles.

6. Mr. CHA (China) urged the Committee to reject the Romanian draft resolution as a propaganda device put forward by the Soviet bloc in an attempt to win the support of the under-developed countries.

7. Mr. LYCHOWSKI (Poland), replying to the argument that it was unnecessary to restate principles already set out in the Charter and in various resolutions, observed that the different principles were not embodied in a single document. Even the articles of GATT reflected the views of some thirty-five countries only and did not take into consideration the world eco-

nomie changes that had taken place in the past twelve years.

8. It was also argued that the declaration was incomplete, but it was significant that no amendments had been proposed. Perhaps the remarks of the previous speaker pointed to the real reasons for the opposition to the draft resolution.

9. In reply to the third objection that the drafting of a declaration would take up too much of the Committee's time and would be of little practical value, he pointed out that if time were limited, another United Nations body could be requested to draft the principles, whose validity was universally recognized.

10. The argument had also been advanced that the proposals were partial in character. In fact, the text was fundamentally economic rather than political, and was a proper subject for discussion by the Second Committee. Even the most-favoured-nation clause had some political implications.

11. His delegation fully supported the draft resolution but would be willing, if the sponsor agreed, to consider constructive proposals by any delegation which considered the present draft unacceptable.

12. Mr. SEN (Pakistan) said that his delegation was in general agreement with the five principles enumerated in the draft resolution, but believed that in the present circumstances such a declaration of principles would not be conducive to better economic relations and might indeed hamper the economic development of the under-developed countries. The implications of the second principle in regard to the nationalization of industries financed by foreign capital might discourage foreign private investment in under-developed countries.

13. In view of the fact that further discussion of the matter would only delay consideration of more practical items he requested the Romanian delegation to withdraw its draft resolution or agree to refer it to a sub-committee. The purpose of the draft had already been achieved since there had been no objection to the principles *per se*. If the draft were pressed to a vote, his delegation might be obliged to abstain.

14. Mr. FLORES MORA (Uruguay), commenting on the Romanian representative's reference to the declaration of economic principles adopted by the recent Economic Conference of the Organization of American States, at Buenos Aires, observed that that declaration was not a repetition of general principles. On the contrary, it dealt with specific subjects such as the volume of trade, the disposal of surpluses, commodity prices, imports of capital goods, public international financial agencies, transport and the situation of landlocked countries. There was therefore no contradiction at all in the fact that Governments which supported the

Buenos Aires declaration should now be opposing the Romanian draft resolution.

15. The Uruguayan delegation for its part was not unduly worried by the lack of definition of the principles in the proposed declaration or their lack of novelty. What seemed to him dangerous and alarming was that they implied a retreat from the Charter to a more primitive state of international relations and that the proposed declaration narrowed the scope of principles that were stated in much broader terms in the Charter. It was not sufficient that States should show consideration for the rights of others only in economic matters; under the Charter such consideration should extend to all relations between peoples.

16. For those and other reasons his delegation would be unable to support the draft, which oversimplified important problems not at present capable of solution. It did not underestimate the significance of the issues raised, but believed that the Committee should direct its attention to the implementation of principles already formulated rather than to the formulation of new declarations.

17. Mr. SOHLMAN (Sweden), while commending the Romanian delegation for its attempt to formulate principles for international economic co-operation, doubted that the present was an appropriate time at which to do so. In fact the Romanian draft included two kinds of principle: principles already established and embodied in the Charter and in earlier resolutions, and principles which were to be defined for the first time. In both cases his delegation thought that the wisest course would be to await the outcome of the Secretary-General's studies on the question of the revision of the Charter. It would then be possible to decide if there was any need to draft such a declaration.

18. Although in sympathy with a number of the principles listed, his delegation would be unable to support the draft resolution.

19. Sir Alec RANDALL (United Kingdom) remarked that it was no easy matter to draft a set of agreed principles of economic co-operation. Indeed, the Soviet Union had in the past voted against, or refused to support, some of the very principles in question. It would therefore, as the Canadian representative had pointed out, be impossible to formulate a declaration of the kind contemplated in the draft without taking political problems into account.

20. Attention had already been drawn to the incompleteness of the proposed declaration and the addition of the words *inter alia* to the fourth operative paragraph of the draft, as suggested by the representative of Ceylon, would not remove the difficulty. Much drafting was needed and, as the example of the draft international covenants on human rights showed, the process would necessarily be a long one. It would be more useful if the Committee turned to the items on technical assistance and the economic development of under-developed countries and made a practical effort to translate into economic terms the spirit of co-operation which had led to the adoption of the Charter.

21. Mr. DENICHENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) regretted that representatives who objected that the principles enunciated in the Romanian proposal were not sufficiently comprehensive had failed to offer any suggestions of their own. His delegation felt that as

the principles commanded general agreement they could be adopted by the Committee without difficulty, with such amendments as might be agreed upon. It was odd that the speakers who urged the Committee to refrain from discussing principles and to concentrate on concrete problems were those who counselled a policy of caution and deliberation when the debate turned on such specific matters as the establishment of SUNFED, of an international trade organization etc. His delegation had rejected the slanderous fabrications of the member of the Chiang Kai-shek group who represented no one in the United Nations. For his part he believed that the Committee could both formulate basic principles of economic co-operation and deal with the concrete problems on its agenda. Adoption of the draft resolution would enhance the prestige of the United Nations and provide a set of agreed principles which would serve to guide countries in their economic relations.

22. His delegation supported the draft resolution.

23. Mr. O'NAGHTEN (Cuba) said that while his country could endorse some of the principles stated in the draft resolution he considered that the proposed declaration required thorough and detailed discussion which would leave the Committee no time to deal with the other items on its agenda. The proposal to insert the words "*inter alia*" before the list of principles would do little to solve the problem, since it would still be necessary to amend and correct the declaration in order to make it all-inclusive. A code of the type envisaged could not be adopted without exhaustive and protracted discussion and it was no doubt in order to avoid a lengthy debate that representatives had refrained from offering amendments to the draft resolution. In his view, more urgent problems claimed the Committee's attention.

24. Mr. DUPRAZ (France) said that the Committee should not devote too much time to a discussion of principles. While his delegation did not underestimate the importance of the principles set out in the draft resolution, it felt that they were not sufficiently comprehensive and would therefore be unable to support the draft resolution.

25. Mr. WOULBROUN (Belgium) endorsed those views. Some of the principles stated in the draft resolution were in keeping with previously enunciated principles but others raised difficulties of interpretation.

26. With regard to the Polish representative's suggestion that the draft resolution might be amended, he noted that the Havana Charter in similar debates had been amended many times in the course of interminable negotiations but had failed to secure general acceptance, which suggested amendment of the draft would serve little purpose.

27. Mr. KRIVEN (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the principles set out in the draft resolution had been criticized as being unduly broad and as lacking in concreteness. It had, for example, been objected that the draft did not refer to specific matters like inflation and price stabilization as they affected relations between economically powerful countries and under-developed countries. However, it was impossible to settle such matters without formulating a set of general principles governing economic relations. The specific question of prices, for instance, could not be settled if

there was no agreement on the principle that equality and mutual advantage were basic considerations.

28. The objection had also been raised that there was nothing new in the principles stated. In fact, however, the acceptance of a declaration embodying those principles would be a new and important step towards their implementation and would contribute, for example, to the eradication of discriminatory policies, such as those pursued by the United States of America, despite its professed adherence to the principles enumerated in the draft. The objection that the principles were not sufficiently comprehensive was not convincing since adoption of the declaration would not preclude the elaboration of more detailed proposals.

29. The Ukrainian delegation believed that the proposed declaration was necessary as a means of protecting the under-developed countries from the domination of richer countries, and therefore supported the draft resolution.

30. Mr. LAMANI (Albania) observed that certain representatives, while admitting the value of the principles set out in the draft resolution, had said that they would be unable to vote for it for various reasons. In particular, they had stressed the need for dealing with practical measures, not with principles. His delegation believed that adoption of the proposed declaration of principles would facilitate practical work. It would show that negotiations were being conducted between equals and would thus be a valuable contribution to peace and economic co-operation.

31. His delegation would therefore support the draft resolution.

32. Mr. COOPER (Liberia) clarifying his delegation's position, said that his delegation would abstain if the draft resolution was put to the vote, as it considered that the declaration of principles was not sufficiently comprehensive.

33. Mr. THOMSON (Australia) said that his country could subscribe to some of the principles included in the draft resolution, but that they were totally inadequate to cover all the interests that should be dealt with. Since a discussion of principles would consume time needed for more important matters, his delegation was unable to support the draft resolution.

34. Mr. ARKADEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the ideas proposed by Romania contained nothing startling. All the ideas set out in the draft resolution were positive and practical in character. The Soviet delegation agreed that action was necessary in matters like inflation, SUNFED and the peaceful uses of atomic energy. These matters were not mutually exclusive, but complementary. Many speakers had expressed misgivings concerning the time which would be required to reach agreement on principles. His delegation felt, however, that the Romanian proposals provided a useful meeting ground. In submitting the resolution, the Romanian delegation had not acted on the assumption that it was presenting an exhaustive code. It had included only those principles which were likely to meet with general acceptance. Further elaboration was perfectly feasible. A start had to be made somewhere and the Romanian resolution offered an excellent starting point.

35. Mr. HALIQ (Saudi Arabia) said that his delegation, like others, was in some difficulty. It sympathized with

those who had misgivings about the draft resolution, for it could reasonably be argued both that the declaration was too general and that it might conflict with national policies. Nevertheless it included sound principles embodied in the Charter and a vote against it would therefore be tantamount to a denial of the principles of the Charter. He accordingly hoped that the matter would not be pressed to a vote and that some other solution might be found, perhaps the appointment of a rapporteur to compile the views of Governments on the subject in a report to be examined by the Economic and Social Council at a future session.

36. Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands) agreed with the view that the adoption of the proposed declaration would serve no useful purpose. The day's proceedings had shown how complex a debate on the subject would be. He had been particularly impressed by the remarks of the Canadian, Mexican and Uruguayan delegations: endorsement of the Romanian draft would indeed detract from rather than add to the Charter. The Soviet Union representative's suggestion that the document should be kept, as it were, fluid, in itself demonstrated how pointless it would be to adopt it. Nor would it bring credit to the Organization if it were to publish such a declaration and promptly declare it incomplete or invalid. He could not agree that the question should be referred to the Secretary-General or the Economic and Social Council; both had other and more urgent tasks to perform. If they were to be required to attempt to draft a set of principles it would be at the expense of the important practical work of the Organization.

37. He hoped, therefore, that the Romanian delegation would not press its proposal to a vote; if it did so, his delegation would be obliged to vote against it.

38. Mr. JABRI (Syria) said that his delegation had not been convinced by the arguments against the Romanian draft resolution. He could find nothing in it which was unacceptable; on the contrary, such a declaration of principles was necessary for international economic relations.

39. Mr. QUINTERO (Panama) observed that the length of the debate which had already taken place on the Romanian draft resolution appeared to justify the apprehensions of some delegations. It was, however, a mistake to speak, as some had done, of an economic charter: five principles did not make a charter, and if the declaration were claimed to be such, his delegation, for one, would find it entirely unacceptable. No charter or code could be drafted in so hasty a manner: it called for immense care and labour. There were, it was true, certain important principles—already embodied in the Charter or in previous resolutions and of great importance to small countries—included in the Romanian draft. In its present form, however, he could not vote for it. There were more urgent and practical problems before the Committee and discussion of that proposal ought therefore to be deferred to a later date, or perhaps referred to a sub-committee for examination and amendment.

40. Mr. ROGERS (Canada) wished to correct the impression which appeared to be current that his delegation was opposed to the elaboration of principles. That was not the case; his objection to the draft resolution had been that it was entirely inadequate and that the drafting of any generally acceptable declaration of such principles would require an immense amount of

time which could not be spared at the present juncture. That applied to the Committee and to all other organs of the United Nations.

41. Mr. SERBAN (Romania) thanked all those delegations which had given the Romanian draft resolution a favourable reception. He also thanked those which had commended the intention of the proposal while being unable to give it their support at the present time. He observed that the idea had originated simultaneously in two widely separated countries in different hemispheres. In a statement in the General Assembly (699th plenary meeting) the Mexican Foreign Minister had expressed the desire to see the United Nations draw up a declaration of economic principles, and at the same time the Romanian delegation had submitted a proposal in the Second Committee for the adoption of a declaration on the bases of economic principles. Those two suggestions showed how experience and

practice had emphasized the necessity and usefulness of drawing up such a declaration.

42. His delegation had given the problem extensive consideration and had tried to find the most general and universally acceptable formulas. The debate so far had shown that all delegations believed that there should be principles: no one argued against them; the only question appeared to be, what should they be? In introducing his delegation's draft he had not suggested that it was a complete or final document; he had in fact sought the co-operation of other delegations and he thanked those, particularly the representative of Ceylon, who had made suggestions. He would take the suggestions and the various proposals about the method of procedure into account and discuss them informally with colleagues before the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.